

# Handling Bullying Policy

## The Japanese School London



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### 1. Introduction

Bullying has become a major social concern not only in Japan, but in many parts of the world. It has caused an increase in emotional instability and non-attendance of students resulting, in some extreme cases, in suicides. Under such circumstances, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT) updated Basic Policy for the Prevention of Bullying, which the Education Ministry revised on March 16, 2017, mandates that schools should prevent bullying of students. It includes the prevention of students based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Japanese School in London regards the problem of bullying as one of the fundamental threats to education. The school is therefore taking measures on a daily basis under the leadership of the Headteacher, such as raising the teachers' awareness about bullying, to insure that any case of bullying is properly dealt with.

### 2. Definition of Bullying

The widely accepted definition of bullying is “a case where a person continuously inflicts physical and psychological attacks upon someone who is in a weaker position than he/she is, and where the person being attacked is experiencing serious pain.” In 2017, MEXT redefined bullying as “a case where a child is suffering from psychological pain by receiving psychological and/or physical attacks from someone with whom he/she has a certain relationship”. At our school, we consider any unreasonable physical or verbal action towards others to be bullying, regardless of the reason.

On the other hand, it is also true that there are various reasons for and backgrounds to bullying, and that it is not an issue that may be solved with ease. There is a need, therefore, for families and communities to be involved to deal with the problem, as a school is not able to solve problems of bullying entirely on its own.

### 3. Handling Procedure

#### (1) Prevention Procedure

Our school is founded on the principle that children should be kind and supportive to each other, and that they should be able to sympathize with others. Therefore, the school is taking daily measures to ensure that all cases of bullying are properly dealt with through the following means.

- Enriching and applying the contents of emotional education within the school curriculum
- Dealing with bullying in Moral Education classes
- Providing a friendly class atmosphere for students which enables them to speak out
- Providing a class environment where students can get to know each other
- Providing occasions where children work in year units, rather than in class units
- Offering occasions where children work with children in other year groups (making use of so called “friendly activities”)
- Sharing of information and cooperation among teachers and staff members
- Dealing with bullying by student council members

## (2) Guidance (Correction) Procedure

At the same time as we investigate and analyse the causes of bullying, we give guidance strictly and seriously to children who have inflicted bullying. For those upon whom bullying was inflicted, we give overall support. Although the kind of guidance given differs case by case, we make every effort to ensure that a teacher or teachers spend(s) enough time listening to the children concerned, and try to see the problems from a children’s point of view.

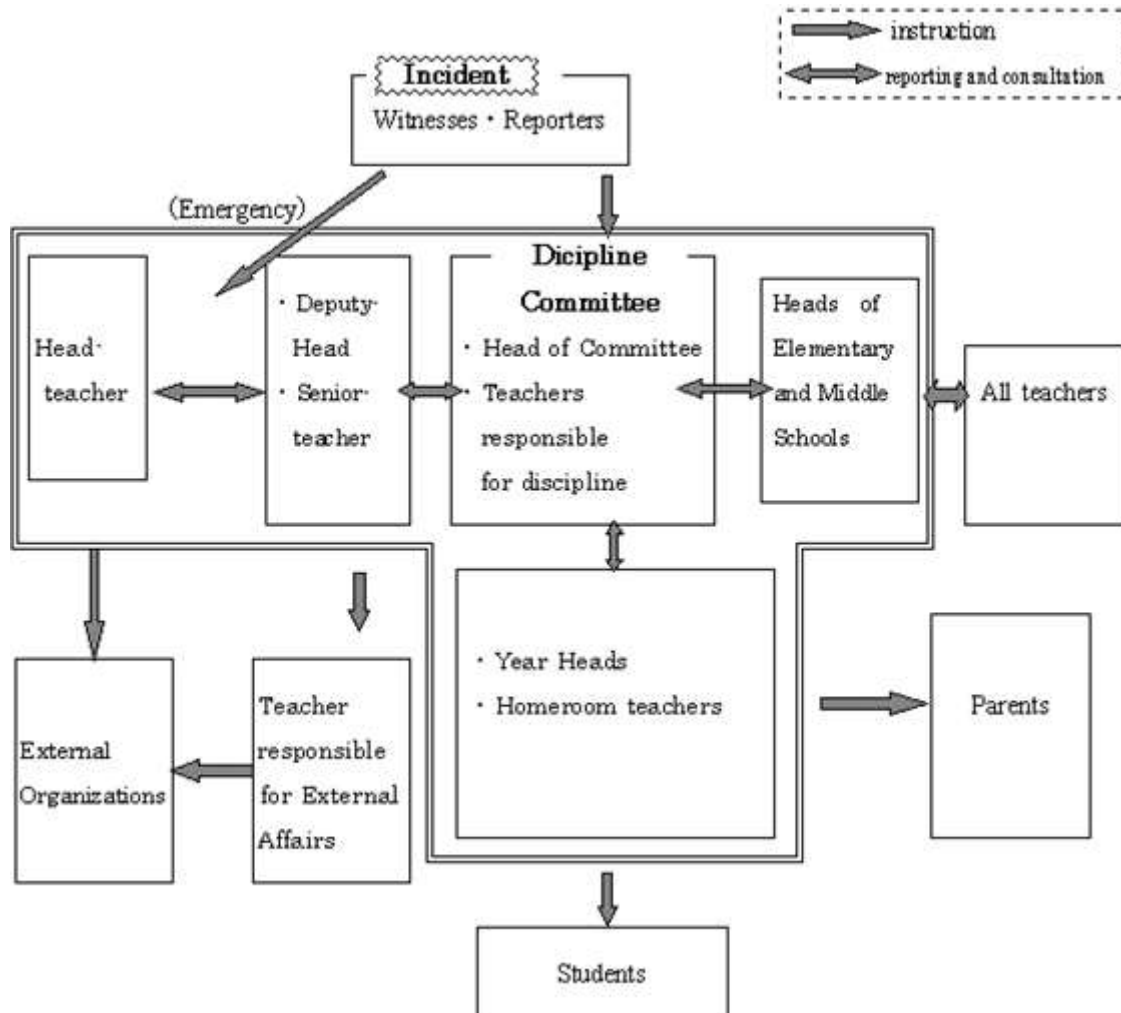
- The homeroom teacher should listen to the students involved in bullying, and should give proper and strict educational guidance so as to solve the problem within the class. To ensure the appropriateness of the content of the guidance, the matter should be discussed beforehand among the homeroom teachers who teach the year group to which the concerned children belong, if necessary involving the School Discipline Committee. Parents of both parties should be well informed of the incident, so that the problem may be solved with their cooperation.
- If it is not possible to solve the problem within the year group, a member of the management (either the Deputy Head or the Head Teacher) will provide guidance.
- If it is not possible to solve the problem after guidance by a member of the management, the parents should be interviewed to allow the next action plan to be discussed.
- If it is not possible to solve the problem after taking all the available steps, the Head may decide to temporarily suspend or expel the student who inflicted bullying.

## 4. Reporting and Guidance System

In order to respond to bullying as soon as possible, we have a system for reporting and giving consultation for each case which is illustrated in the chart below. A report should always be made on the day the bullying incident takes place. Should a case require some time to solve, interim reporting takes place as appropriate. In the case of an emergency, either the Headteacher or the Deputy Head should be directly consulted to take immediate action.

See the chart on the next page.

## Procedures for dealing with concerns



The same procedure should be followed for bullying incidents, absences, or sudden sickness.